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**TENNESSEE EDUCATION LOTTERY SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION PROCESS OPENS JANUARY 2
"PIN" ALLOWS ONLINE SUBMISSION OF FAFSA**

Nashville, Tenn.— Students across the state are preparing to apply for the inaugural Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarships (TELS). Beginning January 2, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) may be submitted. The 2004-05 FAFSA, which requires 2003 income tax information, is the official TELS application.

Students who choose to fill out the FAFSA online will need a personal identification number (PIN), which will serve as an electronic signature. Scholarship applicants and one parent can register for PIN's at www.pin.ed.gov. Instructions on how to retrieve the PIN electronically will be delivered by e-mail within three business days of registration.

Deputy Executive Director of TELS Dr. Myron Oglesby-Pitts said, "We strongly encourage families to take advantage of the online application process, because it can help ensure that data is entered correctly, and it can reduce the processing time from weeks to days. We recommend that families apply by February 15 in order to have the best chance of receiving lottery scholarship dollars."

FAFSA is a federally sponsored program used nationwide to determine students' eligibility for federal or state grants and scholarships, work study programs and loans, and institutional financial aid. The FAFSA is available online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Hard-copy applications are available from high school counselors, college and university financial aid offices, and the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC). The processing time for online applications is approximately seven days. The processing time for hard-copy applications is approximately four to six weeks.

Students who qualify for TELS could earn up to \$4,000 in scholarships per academic year from a combination of five available scholarships, including the \$3,000 HOPE Scholarship. In the first year of TELS, scholarships are available to college freshmen from the high school class of 2003 and high school seniors entering college in fall 2004 who meet ACT and GPA requirements. Additionally, home-schooled students and GED students may qualify. Students attending Tennessee public institutions or Tennessee private institutions accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) may receive TELS funds.

For more information regarding FAFSA or TELS, please contact TSAC at (800) 342-1663 or (615) 741-1346, or visit www.state.tn.us/tsac.

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